

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAM-01 /077 W
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R 270947Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3119
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAMAKO 311

EO 11652: N/A
TAGSC PFOR, ML, AO, UR, US
SUBJ: NOVOSTI PRESS RELEASE ON ANGOLA

1. THE NOVOSTI PRESS AGENCY IN BAMAKO HAS DISTRIBUTED AN UNDATED PRESS RELEASE UNDER THE TITLE "OFFICIAL DECLARATION AND THE ACTUAL FACTS RELATING TO EVENTS IN ANGOLA", WITH A BAMAKO DATETUNE. THE RELEASE CONTRASTS STATEMENTS MADE BY ASST. SEC. SCHAUFELD WHILE ON HIS RECENT TOUR OF AFRICAN CAPITALS WITH "FACTS" COLLECTED FROM VARIOUS WORLD PRESS SOURCES. NOVOSTI CHARACTERIZES AMB. SCHAUFELD'S STATEMENTS AS APPARENTLY BREATHING A SPIRIT OF PEACE, GOOD WILL AND NONINTERFERENCE, BUT CLAIMS THE REAL "FACTS" ARE THAT FNLA AND UNITA HAVE ALWAYS BEEN INSTRUMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES.

2. OTHER CHARGES IN THE PRESS RELEASE INCLUDE:
300 AMERICAN MERCENAIRES FINANCED BY THE CIA ARE "SUCCESSFULLY" CONTRIBUTING TO MASSACRES IN ANGOLA:
THE "HYPOCRITICAL IMPERIALISTS" BEHIND THE FNLA AND UNITA ARE THE SAME WHO ORGANIZED THE ASSASSINATION OF CONFIDENTIAL

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LUMUMBAA; THEY ALSO COLLABORATED WITH SESSIONISTS IN

BIAFRA AND HELPED FASCIST PORTUGAL CONDUCT COLONIAL WARS IN AFRICA. THE RELEASE THEN CITES A PRAVDA STATEMENT THAT THE SOVIET UNION SEEKS NEITHER ECONOMIC, MILITARY, NOR OTHER ADVANTAGE IN ANGOLA. TWICE THE RELEASE DENIES THAT THE USSR SEEKS MILITARY BASES THERE. IT ALSO EMPHASIZES THAT INTERNATIONAL DETENTE DOES NOT MEAN THE "FORCES OF PEACE AND PROGRESS" WILL PERMIT FREEDOM OF ACTION TO AGGRESSORS OR PERMIT RACISTS AND COLONIALISTS TO PILLAGE AFRICA'S NATIONAL RICHES. THE RELEASE CONCLUDES THAT BEHIND THE RACIST SOUTH AFRICANS, IS THE CIA-THE ORGANIZATION OF "SABOTAGE, COUPS D'ETATS AND ASSASSINATIONS;" AND, FINALLY, THAT THE NUMBER ONE ENEMY OF THE AFRICAN PEOPLE IS AMERICAN IMPERIALISM.

3. THE LANGUAGE IS HARSH, BUT THE TONE OF THE RELEASE IS DEFENSIVE, AND APPARENTLY REFLECTS A SOVIET ATTEMPT TO ANSWER OR DENY CHARGES MADE BY U.S. OFFICIALS REGARDING SOVIET ACTIONS IN ANGOLA.

4. ON JANUARY 23, DCM AND PAO CALLED ON ASSANE GUINDO, CHIEF OF THE INFORMATION, CONFERENCES , ETC. DIVISION, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TO CLARIFY THE STATUS OF FOREIGN PRESS RELEASES WITH BAMAKO DATELINES. GUINDO SAID GRM DID NOT INVOLVE ITSELF WITH CENSORSHIP OF PRESS RELEASES,NOR DID IT GIVE OR WITHDRAW PERMISSION FOR THEIR RELEASE, AS LONG AS THEY WERE ISSUED BY NEWS ORGANIZATIONS. DCM SHOWED GUINDO NOVOSTI RELEASE WITH OFFENSIVE SECTIONS UNDERLINED. DCM ASKED IF U.S. EMBASSY WOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO ISSUE A REBUTTAL SHOULD WE DESIRE TO DO SO. QUINDO SAID NO, AN EMBASSY IN MALI COULD NOT ISSUE A NEWS RELEASE WITHOUT GRM AUTHORIZATION. THE U.S. HOWEVER, WAS FREE TO ESTABLISH A SIMILAR PRESS AGENCY OFFICE IN BAMAKO, GUINDO SAID. THE GRM WOULD ALSO AGREE TO GRANT PERMISSION FOR THE U.S. EMBASSY TO HOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE TO REBUT NOVOSTI'S RELEASE. DCM SAID THAT U.S.-MALI DIFFERENCES ON ANGOLA HAD TO DATE BEEN EXPRESSED ONLY IN DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS, AND IT WOULD BE A SHAME TO BRING THEM OUT IN THE OPEN NOW JUST BECAUSE OF THE SOVIETS. GUINDO SAID THAT NEITHER THE GRM NEWSPAPER NOR RADIO MALI WOULD USE THE NOVOSTI RELEASE. (HE FREELY CHARACTERIZED NOVOSTI AS A "COVER" FOR SOVIET

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GOVT.) HE ADDED THAT WE MIGHT WISH TO DISCUSS THE MATTER DIRECTLY WITH THE SOVIET EMBASSY.

5. COMMENT: WE SEE LITTLE MERIT IN A PUBLIC PROPAGANDA BATTLE WITH SOVIETS HERE ON THE ANGOLA ISSUE SINCE MALI IS FIRMLY IN THE MPLA CAMP. IT HAD BEEN OUR HOPE, HOWEVER, THAT UNIDO WOULD CHASTIZE THE SOVIETS FOR THEIR INTEMPERATE LANGUAGE, BUT HE WAS NOT WILLING

TO AGREE TO THAT. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE WERE PLEASED
TO CONFIRM THAT THE RELEASE WILL NOT BE USED BY LOCAL MEDIA.

6. ACTION: NOVOSTI'S REP, MARTIANOV, IS AN EXPERIENCED
AND CAPABLE NEWSMAN/BUREAUCRAT, AND A KGB OFFICER.
WE WOULD BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO PROTEST HIS ACTIONS TO
SOVIET CHARGE D'AFFAIRES VICTOR BARAKHNINE. REQUEST
DEPARTMENT ADVISE.

MCGUIRE

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